

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEC, PFOR, EI

SUBJECT: IRISH FONMIN'S ISRAEL TRIP; EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS'

DISCUSSIONS ON MIDDLE EAST

SUMMARY: ON HIS VISIT TO ISRAEL LAST WEEK, FOREIGN MINISTER FITZGERALD WAS IMPRESSED WITH THE IMMENSE DIFFICULTIES BLOCKING A PEACE SETTLEMENT AND SLIGHTLY DISAPPOINTED THAT ISRAELIS WERE NOT PREPARED TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE. AT A MEETING IN DUBLIN ON JUNE 16, IRISH POLITICAL DIRECTOR NOEL DORR BRIEFED HIS COLLEAGUES ON FITZGERALD'S TRIP TO ISRAEL AND ON RECENT AMERICAN THINKING AS COMMUNICATED TO THE IRISH AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON. EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS WISH TO BE HELPFUL AND TO AVOID ANY ACTION THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH US PEACEMAKING EFFORTS. END SUMMARY

1. IRISH POLITICAL DIRECTOR NOEL DORR BRIEFED US EVENING JUNE 17 ON FONMIN FITZGERALD'S TRIP TO ISRAEL LAST WEEK AND ON RELATED DISCUSSIONS BY EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS AT THEIR MEETING IN DUBLIN JUNE 16.

2. FITZGERALD'S SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS IN ISRAEL WERE WITH ALLON. (RABIN WAS STILL IN WASHINGTON.) DORR SAID THAT HE AND FITZGERALD HAD BEEN IMPRESSED WITH ALLON'S DESCRIPTION OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE ISRAELI POSITION. THE IRISH WERE, NEVERTHELESS, DISAPPOINTED THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE NOT WILLING TO SHOW MORE FLEXIBILITY. THE IRISH COULD EASILY UNDERSTAND AND SYMPATHIZE WITH ALLON'S POINT
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THAT ISRAEL IS THE ONLY COUNTRY WHICH CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE A

WAR. AT THE SAME TIME, THE IRISH THINK THAT ISRAEL CANNOT AFFORD TO LOSE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE PEACE. THE ISRAELIS SEEM TO THINK THAT THEY SHOULD PLAY FOR TIME, RETAINING THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES UNTIL THE ARABS ARE WILLING TO MAKE APPROPRIATE CONCESSIONS FOR THEIR RETURN. THE IRISH ON THE CONTRARY (PRESUMABLY REFLECTING A MORE GENERAL EUROPEAN ATTITUDE), THINK THAT THE SCALES WILL TIP INCREASINGLY AGAINST ISRAEL AS TIME GOES ON.

3. ALLON, UNLIKE THE ARABS, WAS OPPOSED TO ANY EC PRESENCE IN THE GENEVA PEACE TALKS. DORR ASSUMED THAT ALLON OBJECTED PARTICULARLY TO FRANCE, THOUGH THIS WAS NEVER MADE SPECIFIC. ALLON'S ARGUMENT WAS THAT GENEVA WOULD BE USELESS IF IT WERE TURNED INTO A "MINI-UNITED NATIONS." HE ASKED WHETHER COUNTRIES "LIKE INDIA" WOULD NOT WISH TO PARTICIPATE IF THE EC DID. (WE GATHER THAT THE IRISH WERE DISAPPOINTED BY THIS ISRAELI POSITION.)

4. ALLON WAS VERY SKEPTICAL OF THE VALUE OF ANY GUARANTEES TO ISRAEL BY OUTSIDE POWERS. THE ONLY GUARANTEE, HE SAID, WAS A GOOD ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE AND PEOPLE WITH HIGH MORALE. HE NOTED THE POOR PAST HISTORY OF GUARANTEES, MENTIONING THOSE GIVEN BY EISENHOWER. ALLON WAS WELL BRIEFED ON THE SMALL IRISH CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNEF CONTINGENT AND USED THIS AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE. HE NOTED THAT THE IRISH TROOPS HAD BEEN GOOD, "JUST THE KIND OF PEOPLE WE WANT," AND HE DID NOT REPROACH THE IRISH FOR WITHDRAWING THEM AFTER THE DUBLIN BOMBINGS OF 1974. HE SAID HE FULLY RECOGNIZED THAT THE IRISH NEEDED ALL THEIR MANPOWER AT HOME AND THAT IRISH NATIONAL INTERESTS NATURALLY HAD TO COME FIRST AT A TIME OF SUCH DIFFICULTY. BUT ALLON SAID THAT THIS WAS EXACTLY HIS POINT: IN A TIME OF REAL DIFFICULTY, ISRAEL WOULD BE ABLE TO RELY ONLY ON ITS OWN FORCES.

5. ALLON READILY ACKNOWLEDGED THE IMPORTANCE OF DEALING WITH THE PALESTINE PROBLEM. HE REFUSED TO DEAL WITH THE PLO, HOWEVER "NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE PALESTINIANS, BUT IN SPITE OF IT." TO DEAL WITH THE PLO, HE SAID, WOULD BE TO LET DOWN HUSSEIN AND THE MODERATE PALESTINIANS.

6. ALLON SAID THAT IF THE ARABS WERE REALLY WILLING TO NEGOTIATE THEY WOULD FIND THE ISRAELIS PREPARED TO SETTLE ALL THE OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS. THE IRISH, HOWEVER, SAW SOME INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN THIS ASSURANCE AND ALLON'S APPARENT DETERMINATION TO HANG ON TO PORTIONS

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OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. ALLON SAID HE HOPED HE COULD ASSUME THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS WERE OUT OF THE QUESTION, IN WHICH CASE SOME EXTRA TERRITORIAL DEPTH FOR ISRAEL IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FOR EXTRA WARNING AGAINST SURPRISE ATTACK. HE TALKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF LEASING SOME OF THE TERRITORIES FROM THE ARABS FOR A PERIOD OF 15 OR 20 YEARS AFTER THE PEACE SETTLEMENT. THE IRISH HAD NOT HEARD THIS IDEA BEFORE AND WERE INCLINED TO THINK THE ARABS WOULD NOT BE INTERESTED, THOUGH THE IRISH RECOGNIZED THAT

IT WAS AN INGENIOUS THOUGHT.

7. DORR THEN MOVED TO THE EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING, WHICH HAD BEEN HELD IN DUBLIN THE PREVIOUS DAY (JUNE 16). HE SAID THAT THE MEETING HAD HEARD A REPORT ON THE OPENING OF THE EURO/ARAB DIALOGUE BY EAMONN GALLAGHER (SEPTELS). DORR HAD ALSO BRIEFED HIS COLLEAGUES ON FITZGERALD'S TRIP TO ISRAEL, FOLLOWING SAME LINES AS ABOVE. DORR THEN GAVE THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS TWO PIECES OF INFORMATION ON AMERICAN THINKING. FIRST, HE SUMMARIZED A BRIEFING GIVEN RECENTLY BY UNDERSECRETARY SISCO TO IRISH AMBASSADOR MOLLOY IN WASHINGTON. THE GIST OF DORR'S PRESENTATION OF THIS WAS THAT THE DEPARTMENT IS CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC, BASED ON DISCUSSIONS WITH RABIN, BUT THAT SECRETARY KESSINGER WILL WANT TO BE ALMOST SURE OF SUCCESS BEFORE ATTEMPTING ANOTHER PEACE-MAKING MISSION. SECOND, DORR TOLD THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS OF A "VERY TIGHTLY HELD" AMERICAN PROPOSAL FOR GRANTING LARGE SUMS OF ECONOMIC AID TO EGYPT. THIS PROPOSAL, DORR TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES, HAD BEEN RELAYED TO MOLLOY AS WELL AS TO THE GERMANS, BRITISH, AND FRENCH. THE GERMAN POLITICAL DIRECTOR SPOKE UP TO SAY THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE IDEA WAS TO FURNISH CAIRO WITH "VERY LARGE SUMS OF MONEY" BEYOND CURRENT AID COMMITMENTS. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS NOTED THIS WITH INTEREST BUT CONSIDERED IT CLEARLY A MATTER FOR DECISION AT HIGHER LEVELS.

8. DORR SAID THAT THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS WERE GLAD TO HAVE INFORMATION ON AMERICAN THINKING AND THAT, AS IN THE PAST, THEY WISH TO BE HELPFUL. IN PARTICULAR, THEY WISH TO AVOID ANY EC ACTION THAT WOULD CONFLICT WITH US EFFORTS TO BRING PEACE.

9. COMMENT: IT IS CHARACTERISTIC OF FITZGERALD TO BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FINDING A SOLUTION TO ALMOST ANY PROBLEM -- AND TO WISH TO APPLY HIS OWN FORMIDABLE TALENTS TOWARD THE SOLUTION. IN THIS CASE, HOWEVER, EVEN FITZGERALD SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND THE PROBLEM DISCOURAGING.

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